

# Homeless Children in the School Nutrition Programs

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# McKinney-Vento Homeless Act 2002

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- (Title X of NCLB) Amended in January 2002
  - Clarified definition of homeless children and youth
  - Required districts to designate homeless liaison

# To expedite delivery of nutritional benefits..

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School officials may accept documentation from:

- homeless liaison
- director of a shelter or transitional housing project where children resides

# Documentation of free meal eligibility must consist of:

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- A completed meal application  
or
- Letter from homeless liaison or director of a shelter or transitional housing project where the child resides

# Meal Application

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- Homeless liaison will complete the application on the child's behalf
- Identify on application – Homeless
- Sign the application and indicate "Homeless Liaison"

# **Letter/list from homeless liaison or shelter official**

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- Name of child or children involved
- Effective date of eligibility
- Signature of Homeless Liaison or Director of Shelter

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# **Homeless child/family residing with another household/host family**

# Homeless child residing with another household/host family

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- A child or family may temporarily reside with another household/host family and still be considered homeless under the McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act.



# Homeless child residing with another household/host family

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- In these cases, the household size and income of the household/host family is not taken into consideration in determining the free meal eligibility for the child(ren) designated as homeless by homeless liaison.

# Can the household/host family apply for meal benefits for their own children?

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Yes, the household/host family may, if it chooses:

- include the homeless family as household members if the household/host family provides financial support to the homeless family, such as shelter, utilities, clothing or food;

AND

# **Can the household/host family apply for meal benefits for their own children?**

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- if household/host family includes the homeless family as household members then household/host family must include any income received by the homeless family

# Determining eligibility of household/host family

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- School officials must determine eligibility for the household/host family in traditional manner using total household members and income from all sources.

# Determining eligibility of homeless child on household/host family's application

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- Free meal eligibility for the homeless child(ren) is based on the documentation from homeless liaison, even when the child is included on the household/host family's free and reduced price meal application

# Determining Eligibility

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- If the household/host family meets eligibility guidelines school officials should provide the household/host family with temporary approval for benefits.
- The host's family eligibility should be re-evaluated when their household size decreases, i.e., the homeless family leaves.

# Homeless Liaison reminders..

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- Update list when change occurs and notify food service and/or school official (Date child left school or no longer homeless)
- The determination of the child as “homeless” continues until the child has moved out of the district or the homeless liaison terminates the designation of “homeless” for the child

# **Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004**

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- Amended the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to make runaway, homeless and migrant children categorically eligible for free meal benefits
- Established requirement for documenting a child's status as runaway, homeless, or migratory



# For Assistance

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